

**THE ETHICAL BASIS OF MEDICAL PRACTICE.** By Willard L. Sperry, Dean of the Harvard Divinity School. Paul B. Hoeber, Inc., 49 East 33rd Street, New York, N. Y., 1950. \$2.50.

When a doctor of divinity, eminent and respected in his chosen field, with a background of many years of helpful and constructive experience in ministering to the mental and spiritual needs of our patients, sees fit to analyze the philosophical basis for our art and science he deserves a thoughtful and attentive hearing.

"The Ethical Basis of Medical Practice" presents in a book of 178 pages divided into 14 chapters the careful and studied conclusions of the dean of the Harvard Divinity School, and comprises in essence the subject matter of two addresses given by the author, one to the students of Harvard Medical School and the other the Roger Morris Lecture for the academic year 1948-49 at the Medical School of the University of Michigan.

The first chapter, "Our Overlapping Professions," indicates Dean Sperry's belief that medicine and the ministry have much in common, and that rather than be antagonistic to or suspicious of each other the representatives of each profession should strive to work harmoniously together in the recognition that the sick individual is in sum a human being with need for spiritual guidance as well as for physical restoration.

In the second chapter, "The Specialist and the General Practitioner," some broad general advice is given to the medical student or intern in the determination of whether to follow general practice or to enter one of the specialties. The author indicates that the minister must have a broad general knowledge of philosophy as well as a keen understanding of human nature in all of its manifestations. The implication is that if he were to specialize in one particular field he would lose his value to serve best the needs of his parishioners. The author's indication of the type of medical student best suited for general practice, and of the one most likely to serve best as a specialist is objective and helpful.

As a basis for evaluating medical ethics, Chapter III, "The Nature of Conscience," deals with fundamentals in the definition of morals, ethics, and conscience.

In Chapter V, "Professions in General," the author begins by emphasizing the theoretical difference between professions and trades and insists on the fact that trades are conducted for profit and professions are organized for service. The question of medical fees, a limited reference to the English system of compulsory health insurance, and some excellent examples of the value of professional ethics to the public, make this chapter particularly valuable. In subsequent chapters, codes of medical ethics are analyzed, quotations from the American Medical Association presented, and historical background indicated. The American tradition of the immediacy and intimacy of the relationship between doctor and patient is expressed as one of the basic fundamentals. By comparison with the ethical codes of ministers and lawyers, the author accords first place to the physician's code and the manner in which he lives it and defends it.

Having laid an excellent philosophic background for the code of medical ethics, the author now addresses himself to specific applications of that code and the difficulties these applications entail.

In Chapter VII, "Our Tragic Moral Choices," are presented some excellent illustrations, one of which is the conflict in which the physician finds himself when an apparently incurable patient requires repeated transfusions of a rare type of blood and the hospital laboratory indicates this rare type of blood should not be wasted on the hope-

less patient but should be reserved for use on others whose lives might be saved. After considerable discussion, the author concludes that the true physician must continue to give the transfusions regardless of the apparent hopelessness of the patient under treatment. In a subsequent chapter in elaboration of this conclusion he states that the diagnosis of incurability in this instance was in error, that ultimately the patient so treated did recover.

Chapters headed "Democratic vs. Totalitarian Medicine," "Telling the Truth to the Patient" and "The Prolongation of Life," elaborate the author's fundamental belief in the value and dignity of each individual life, and the basic duty of the physician to preserve and prolong that life and make it as comfortable and happy as possible under any and all circumstances. This basic philosophy prepares the reader for the next two chapters—"Euthanasia—Pro," and "Euthanasia—Con." In "Euthanasia—Pro," there is a definition of the doctrine followed by a brief historical background which includes reference to the Greek attitude and that of primitive societies. A short modern history of the euthanasian movement is given with particular reference to the literature as supplied by the Euthanasian Society of America. In Chapter XII, "Euthanasia—Con," the author honestly and forcefully states his position in opposition to these proposals. He indicates the complications and dangers that might beset society were such a law on the statute books. He cites the corruption of medical ethics in Nazi Germany and refers to Dr. Ivy's article portraying medical crimes as practiced under the Nazi regime. He indicates the basic error of that regime was that the economic welfare of the state was considered of greater importance than the care of the individual patient, and upon that philosophical error the morale of the medical profession disintegrated. He sees in this fact the basic fallacy in the euthanasia philosophy which is that there is such a thing as a life not worth living. As a minister, he contends that all life has value. As a logical consequence of the basic principles of the euthanasia movement he visualizes a social system in which doctors of the army and navy, for example, would go through our veterans' hospitals and cull out the physical and mental misfits in the interest of economic efficiency.

The entire work is well written, studiously presented, and carefully documented as to sources. It leaves the physician-reader with an increased respect for the life of every individual patient under his care and the desire so to practice his art that each patient may indeed receive the care and consideration to which he is entitled as an individual human being and not as a cog in a collectivist machine.

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**DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS OF INTERNAL DISEASES—Clinical Analysis and Synthesis of Symptoms and Signs.** By Julius Bauer, M.D., F.A.C.P., Clinical Professor of Medicine, College of Medical Evangelists, Los Angeles. 866 pages. Grune and Stratton, New York, 1950. \$12.00.

This large book on differential diagnosis demonstrates an exceedingly large fund of information and personal experiences on the part of the author. This is in keeping with what might be expected from his hospital and clinical background.

The unique feature of the book is the wealth of individual case reports with which the author documents the points that he wishes to emphasize in differential diagnosis. This is most useful and emphasizes the author's opinions in a way not possible with words alone. In the case reports and in the discussions, the author demonstrates a well-marked awareness of the importance of the emotions in disease and of psychosomatic correlations.

The author frequently refers to laboratory tests rather than to fine distinctions of symptoms or clinical course in

the differentiation of various disorders; this is the major criticism that the reviewer offers.

The book in general can be recommended as an interesting and personal discussion of differential diagnosis documented by case histories and reflecting largely continental opinion, although the American point of view is also presented.

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**HANDBOOK OF PEDIATRIC MEDICAL EMERGENCIES.** By Adolph G. DeSanctis, M.D., Professor of Pediatrics, Postgraduate Medical School, New York University-Bellevue Medical Center; and Charles Varga, M.D., Instructor in Pediatrics, Postgraduate Medical School, New York University-Bellevue Medical Center. 51 illustrations. The C. V. Mosby Company, St. Louis, 1951. 284 pages. \$5.00.

This book had its beginning as a guide to the resident staff of the hospitals with which Dr. DeSanctis is associated and as a compendium for use in the pediatric courses of the Postgraduate Medical School. In these capacities it underwent several revisions, culminating in a privately printed edition.

The present volume is the outgrowth of this earlier material. It is therefore better organized and more complete than might be the case were it an initial effort of the authors.

There is a chapter each devoted to cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, genito-urinary, neurological, and respiratory emergencies. There is also a chapter each on drowning, poisoning, care of the premature infant, and miscellaneous emergencies.

The final chapter is an illustrated one on pediatric procedures. The book completely fulfills the purpose for which it was written and should be useful to pediatricians and others seeing infants and children in their practice.

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**PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF OBSTETRICS—10th Edition.** By J. P. Greenhill, M.D., Attending Obstetrician and Gynecologist, the Michael Reese Hospital; Obstetrician and Gynecologist, Associate Staff, the Chicago Lying-In Hospital; Professor of Gynecology, Cook County Graduate School of Medicine. (Originally by Joseph B. DeLee.) 1,140 illustrations, 194 in color. W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1951. 1,020 pages. \$12.00.

In this tenth edition of DeLee's "Obstetrics" Greenhill appears for the first time as the sole author, although DeLee's name still is retained on the back of the cover, beneath that of Greenhill. On the title page it is noted that the text originally was written by Joseph B. DeLee but he is not otherwise identified except in the last line of the preface, where he is called "one of the greatest obstetricians of all time." When it is time for the next edition of this important work, the author and publishers might consider including a brief biographical sketch of DeLee, at least to the extent of a paragraph in the preface, because by then the book will be read by many with no first-hand knowledge of how obstetrics blossomed in the Chicago area early in the twentieth century under this master's leadership.

It is regrettable that Greenhill has permitted the size of the new edition to exceed that of its predecessor by some nine pages instead of making a drastic cut in total bulk. While it is true that many deletions have been made, the gaps have been more than filled by new material. The author states that he has "practically rewritten the entire book" and that "not a single page remains as it was." In a way this is true, but only in the sense that the material has been physically rearranged with respect to positioning on the various pages. Obviously the major portion of the text has not been changed because obstetrical practice is not appreciably different from what it was in 1947. A glance

at the table of contents would suggest drastic changes in the new edition but one soon discovers that this results merely from the extirpation of fifty per cent of the "section" numbers and two of the chapter numbers. There has been a certain amount of amalgamation of old chapter headings, as well as the insertion of two new chapters, one by Helene Deutsch dealing with the psychology of pregnancy and one to accommodate vomiting of pregnancy, the discussion of which logically has been removed from the chapter on toxemias. The format of the table of contents has been improved greatly by better spacing and more attractive type, and throughout the book there are evidences of increased spacing between words so that the pages appear less crowded.

All of the recent advances in obstetric thinking and practice appear to have been included, and certainly this volume continues to merit its position as one of the most popular American reference works on obstetrics. There would seem to be little need to say more about a book which has been a best-seller for almost 40 years.

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**THERAPY OF DERMATOLOGIC DISORDERS—Including a Guide to Diagnosis and a Dermatologic Pharmacopeia.** By Samuel M. Peck, M.D., Dermatologist to the Mount Sinai Hospital; Associate Clinical Professor of Dermatology, Columbia University; and George Klein, M.D., Assistant Clinical Professor of Dermatology, New York Medical College. Lea and Febiger, Philadelphia, 1951. 383 pages. \$6.50.

A unique approach to the treatment of skin disorders that is of great value to both the general physician and the dermatologist.

An unusual feature of the book, particularly helpful to the non-specialist, consists of topographical charts showing, by means of a code, the skin disorders most commonly seen in any given location. After referring to the code and the indicated diagnosis the reader will find a concise description of the disease and its treatment.

The dermatologist will be more interested in the last third of the book which is an excellent dermatologic pharmacopeia. Practically all of the drugs, both old and new, which are used in treating dermatologic disorders are discussed as to origin, action and use. Many valuable prescriptions are given.

A separate chapter by William Leifer briefly summarizes the diagnosis and treatment of venereal diseases.

This book is a valuable aid to anyone interested in the dermatoses.

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**REVIEW OF PHYSIOLOGICAL CHEMISTRY.** By Harold A. Harper, Ph.D., Professor of Biology, University of San Francisco, Lecturer in Surgery, University of California School of Medicine. Third Edition. University Medical Publishers, P.O. Box 761, Palo Alto. 260 pages. \$3.50.

This small and economically published book fulfills the author's stated intentions in that it concisely presents fundamentals of physiological chemistry with attention to their application to medicine. Controversial topics and certain very recent advances have been avoided altogether or noted but briefly. The field is satisfactorily reviewed.

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#### Correction:

The price of "Atlas of Human Anatomy," Volumes I and II, by M. W. Woerdeman, published by the Blakiston Company, Philadelphia, is \$5.50 per volume and \$11 per set. In the notice accompanying the review published in the August issue of CALIFORNIA MEDICINE, the price was given incorrectly as \$10 per volume, \$18 per set.